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April 8, 1978

To: School Officials
From: Georgia Rice, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Re: Guide for Granting Academic Credit Toward Graduation for Services or Work Experience in the Community.

Recently a number of government and professional organizations, including the National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education and the National Association of Secondary School Principals have advocated community-based learning experiences. Community-based service and work experiences can combine the best of two educational worlds - academic classroom activities and on-the-job-training. It extends the classroom to make the whole community the learning environment. However, the successful combining of academic endeavors with service and work experience requires a structure. Therefore, we have proposed this guide to assist school officials in organizing a process whereby students can be granted credits toward graduation for participation in service and work experiences in the community.

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Proposed Guide for Granting Academic Credit Toward Graduation for Service or work Experience in the Community.

Statement of Purpose:

The Office of Public Instruction encourages and supports endeavors to utilize community resources to provide students in all grades the opportunity to participate in community based education. The purpose of this guide is to outline proposed regulations for and make recommendations on the organization and implementation of a community based education program. If credits are to be awarded toward high school graduation, the final decision on the awarding of credits is the authority and responsibility of the local boards of trustees.

For Superintendents, Principals, Teacher-Coordinators and Service, Work/Study Supervisors.

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Setting policies and administrative procedures

Part I. Standards for Accreditation of Montana Schools which apply:

- A. **Standard 115:** Each school district shall schedule a school term consisting of at least 180 days. This standard is in accordance with Section 75-7402, R.C.M., 1947, as amended.
 - B. **Standard 180:** Standard school day. As provided in Section 75-7403, "School day of pupil instruction shall be at least six hours for grades four through twelve". (See Section 75-6902 for exceptions for eleventh or twelfth grade students.)
 - C. **Standard 221:** Teachers shall be assigned at the levels and in the subjects for which their certificates are endorsed. The service or work experience must be coordinated by a certified teacher. One teacher may coordinate the service or work experience of up to thirty (30) students.
- Standard 221:** Community based educational endeavors for which credit is to be awarded would probably require a teacher coordinator endorsed as follows:
- a) Industrial arts (62)
 - b) Trades and Industry (65)

This endorsement will be accompanied by specific areas such as: carpentry, electronics, food services, etc.
 - c) Distributive Education (64)
 - d) Home Economics (63)
 - e) Business (70)
 - f) Guidance and Counseling (94)

Part II. Teacher Coordinator: Continuous liaison must be maintained between the teacher coordinator, job supervisor and the student to assure maintenance of educational effort. The coordinator must have enough time to supervise the participating students on the job or service site and to articulate related classroom instruction. The teacher coordinator should be in contact with the job or service supervisor on a daily basis and should hold conferences with job or service supervisors on a weekly basis.

Part III. Program Guidelines:

- A. An operational service, work/study program should be evaluated for general education potential and be relevant to the school's educational goals and objectives.
- B. Such programs should be analyzed or designed with consideration for the academic needs of the individual student. A student's past performance should be reviewed to determine needed skills and competencies, i.e., reading, mathematics, writing. A student's record should also be reviewed for the number and types of units needed for graduation.
- C. Content specified in syllabi of the school's various required courses should be considered for inclusion in the service, work/study program.
- D. An individual service, work/study plan or contract should be developed for each student. Such a document should include those academic areas that the employer-instructor will teach and performance standards for the student. Regular performance evaluations should be provided for the employer-instructor and the student.
- E. The teacher coordinator should monitor the academic progress made by each student. Assistance of specific subject matter teachers may also be needed. It is recommended that students in the program periodically meet with teachers to resolve any specific academic problems. Liaisons should be established between classroom teachers and on-site teacher-coordinator(s).
- F. Subject matter teachers should review individual service, work/study plans for their appropriateness in their respective subject areas.
- G. A reporting schedule for the evaluation of a student's academic progress should be established. It might be the same as the one used for regular classes.

Clearly delineated educational goals, objectives and specific skills will help assure that the student experiences will contribute to their educational development as well as to their employability.

Part IV: Parental Involvement:

It is recommended that a student's parents be involved in the selection and implementation of any community service or work experience activity in which their student is involved. The parents should be involved in the initial planning phases and through periodic conferences. Parents, job supervisors, teachers and the student should meet periodically to discuss that student's progress in fulfilling the educational goals, objectives and skill development requirements.

Part V: In-Service Training:

It is recommended that in-service training be provided for the job supervisors and the teacher-coordinators. In-service training should include such topics as developing educational goals and objectives, student motivation, supervision, procedures for handling problems, programs, concerns and evaluation.

Part VI: Development of policies and procedures for beginning, terminating, or completion of the community service or work experience:

The board of trustees and school administration should develop policies and procedures which clearly delineate processes for beginning the work experience as well as processes for terminating the experience, should it not be beneficial to the student, job supervisor or the organization for which the student is employed. These procedures and policies should cover the awarding of credit for successful completion of the service or work experience.

